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DEPARTMENT FOR S/ES-CR AND S/ES-O

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SUBJECT: BHUTANESE KING AND PM CONGRATULATE PRESIDENT OBAMA

¶1. (U) Summary. Post received letters of congratulations to President Barack Obama from Prime Minister Jigmi Thinley and His Majesty the Fifth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. The letter from the Prime Minister is the signed original and we will forward the original via pouch and fax a copy to SCA/INS. The letter from His Majesty is a copy of his three page handwritten letter to the President. We will fax the copy and forward the original when post receives it. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Below is the text of the letter from the Prime Minister.

Begin text:

20 January, 2009.

Your Excellency,

I have the pleasure to extend, on behalf of the people and government of Bhutan and on my own behalf, our heartiest felicitations on Your Excellency's assumption of office as the President of the United States of America.

By electing Your Excellency as their leader, the people of the United States of America have voted not only for historic changes, but also for your inspirational qualities as a leader of destiny. I am confident that under Your Excellency's wise and dynamic stewardship, the United States of America and its people will enjoy greater peace and prosperity while continuing to play a leadership role in furthering understanding, peace and cooperation among all nations.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

//signed//

Jigmi Y. Thinley
Prime Minister of Bhutan

H.E. Mr. Barack Obama,
President of the United States of America,
Washington, D.C.

End text.

¶3. (U) Below is the text of the letter from His Majesty.

Begin text:

21 January, 2009.

Your Excellency President Obama,

We join the global community in extending our warmest

felicitations on the historic occasion of your accession to the most revered post of the President of a nation that stands for the highest ideals and achievements of humanity. As you assume the high office of the President of the United States of America, I join my people in offering our best wishes and prayers for the prosperity and happiness of the American people.

Your political journey is a testimony of the resolve, strength and vision of the august institutions of democracy. Your vision and selfless commitment to the great and noble causes for the good of humanity, transcending boundaries will continue to inspire the American people and the world at large. As you lead the great nation that symbolizes the highest principles and values of democracy, we stand united as the world's youngest democracy in further nurturing the ideals of good governance for universal peace and prosperity.

Your message of hope and change have reverberated across nations and communities and we share our confidence and optimism in your enduring beliefs in common good that will once more lead America and the world through these impending concerns of security and economy.

I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes for the good health and happiness of Your Excellency, your wife Michelle and daughters Malia and Sasha.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

//signed//

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Jigme K. N. Wangchuck

End text.

¶4. (U) Comment. The earnest, hand-written letter from His Majesty exemplifies the excitement generated by the election and inauguration in the region. As the leader of a fledgling democracy in a difficult neighborhood, the King clearly feels inspired by President Obama's leadership skills and message of change. Both letters reinforce recent messages from the tiny Himalayan kingdom that it seeks to continue to strengthen the bilateral relationship, albeit informally for now. End Comment.

MULFORD